

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 PM-03 SP-02 L-01

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R 251310Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7204

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 TANANARIVE 0776

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, MA, US

SUBJECT: US-MALAGASY RELATIONS

REF: TANANARIVE 0728

BEGIN SUMMARY: ANDRIAMHAZO CONSIDERS AMERICANS TO HAVE LET HIM DOWN OVER REPPAS' DISAPPEARANCE, AND CLEARLY FEELS THIS HAS HURT HIM POLITICALLY. CONTRARY TO MARCH 14 MEETING, HE SEEMS QUITE AMBIVALENT AS TO WHETHER HE WILL LEAVE OR STAY AS HEAD OF STATE/GOVERNMENT. MAIN ALTERNATIVE WOULD BE RATSIRAKA (ANTITHETICAL TO U.S. INTERESTS) OR POSSIBLY SOJA (WHO IS UNKNOWN QUANTITY IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS). I RAN THROUGH AID REALIZATIONS AND POSSIBILITIES TO SHOW ANDRIAMHAZO EXTENT OF SUPPORT BEING GIVEN HIM, BUT HE REMAINS PREOCCUPIED BY EFFECT OF REPPAS' DISAPPEARANCE. RECOMMENDATION: CONSIDERATION OF PERSONAL LETTER FROM SECRETARY TO ANDRIAMHAZO TO BOLSTER HIS MORALE AND INFLUENCE HIM TO STAY IN PRESENT POSITION (OR EQUIVALENT) IN VIEW HIS IMPORTANCE TO U.S. INTERESTS. END SUMMARY.

1. CHAIRMAN, MILITARY DIRECTORY, GENERAL ANDRIAMHAZO RECEIVED ME AT HIS HOUSE APRIL 24 AS RESULT MY REQUEST FOR PRIVATE TALK DURING FAREWELL CALL. HE MAY ALSO
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RECEIVE ME LATER WITH CERTAIN OTHER MEMBERS OF DIRECTORY, AS HE DID GERMAN AMBASSADOR ON RECENT FAREWELL CALL.

2. CENTRAL MATTER ON ANDRIAMHAZO'S MIND WAS DISAPPEARANCE

OF REPPAS, AMERICAN PRISONER WHO WAS PERMITTED STAY AT EMBASSY FOR SEVERAL WEEKS PRIOR HIS DISAPPEARANCE. ANDRIAMAHAZO FEELS EMBASSY FAILED IN ITS RESPONSIBILITY RE REPPAS, AND HE BEING TAUNTED AND ATTACKED WITHIN DIRECTORY BECAUSE OF WAY AMERICANS HAD LET HIM DOWN IN REPPAS AFFAIR. I REFERRED TO RECENT SUPPORT WE HAD DEMONSTRATED FOR HIM THROUGH DISASTER RELIEF, RAILROAD LOAN AND PL 480 RICE. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THIS SUPPORT, BUT STATED THAT POLITICAL GAIN DERIVING FROM THESE MEASURES WE HAD SACRIFICED BY OUR FAILURE WITH RESPECT REPPAS. HE CLEARLY APPEARED FEEL THAT REPPAS' DISAPPEARANCE HAS HURT HIM POLITICALLY, AND ASSERTED THAT BEST STEP WE COULD TAKE WOULD BE TO RETURN REPPAS TO GOMR CUSTODY. (MORE DETAILS ON REPPAS DISCUSSION IN SEPTTEL.)

3. HE ALSO BROUGHT UP WHAT HE REGARDS AS LACK OF COOPERATION OF FRENCH. COMPLAINED THAT FRENCH GOVT DID NOT TAKE STRONGER ACTION WITH RESPECT TO "MALAGASY GOVERNMENT IN EXILE," AND FAILURE FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER RECEIVE MALAGASY AMBASSADOR DESPITE THREE ATTEMPTS BY LATTER. ANDRIAMAHAZO THEREFORE CLAIMS HE IS BEING LET DOWN BY WESTERN DEMOCRACIES, WHO SHOULD BE BACKING HIM UP IN VIEW OF HIS FOREIGN POLICY POSITION.

4. SOUNDING RATHER DISCOURAGED, ANDRIAMAHAZO STATED SEVERAL TIMES HE IS NOT REALLY CUT OUT FOR POLITICS. HE REFERRED TO HIS ELIGIBILITY FOR MILITARY RETIREMENT IN MAY 1976, AND INDICATED HE MIGHT ABONDON POSITION AS HEAD OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT EARLIER. HE EVEN MENTIONED THAT NEW GOVERNMENT TO DRAW UP CONSTITUTION AND ELECTIONS MIGHT BE SET UP AS EARLY AS NEXT MONTH, WITH YOUNGER MAN IN CHARGE.

5. HOWEVER, AT OTHER POINTS IN OUR RAMBLING TALK HE SOUNDED MORE POSITIVE NOTE. IN ANY NEW GOVERNMENT HEADED BY YOUNGER MAN HE WOULD TAKE POSITION AS MINISTER OF STATE (SIMILAR TO ROLE HE HAD BEEN GIVEN IN SHORT-LIVED RATSIMANDRAVA GOVERNMENT), AND WOULD USE THAT ROLE TO KEEP SECRET

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GOVERNMENT ON PATH THAT DID NOT STRAY TOO FAR TO LEFT OR RIGHT. IF SUCH GOVERNMENT MOVED TOO FAR TO LEFT, HE WOULD, AS THE SENIOR OFFICER IN ARMED FORCES (HE WILL BECOME MADAGASCAR'S ONLY ACTIVE MAJOR GENERAL BY PROMOTION MAY 1), TAKE CONTROL AGAIN TO RIGHT GOVERNMENT'S COURSE. HE EVEN SLYLY NOTED THAT HE IS KEEPING OTHER MEMBERS OF DIRECTORY GUESSING AS TO WHETHER HE WILL LEAVE OR STAY AS HEAD OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT. (COMMENT: PERHAPS THOSE TACTICS IMPROVE HIS POLITICAL LEVERAGE WITHIN DIRECTORY. IN ANY CASE, HE CERTAINLY LEFT ME GUESSING, TOO, AS TO WHETHER HE WILL LEAVE OR STAY IN HIS PRESENT POSITION OR ITS EQUIVALENT IN A NEW GOVERNMENT. I WOULD NOT EXPECT ANY MOVE OF ANY KIND UNTIL AFTER CURRENT

MAJOR TRIAL IS CONCLUDED, PROBABLY TOWARD END MAY.)

6. COMMANDER RATSIRAKA IS OF COURSE VERY MUCH IN RUNNING IF YOUNGER MAN TAKES OVER FROM ANDRIAMAHAZO. ANDRIAMAHAZO MADE CLEAR RATSIRAKA IS INTENSELY POLITICAL AND VERY AMBITIOUS. BUT, ANDRIAMAHAZO ADDED, WHILE RATSIRAKA IS STRONG "EXTERNALLY," HE NEEDS TO BUILD HIMSELF UP "INTERNALLY." ANDRIAMAHAZO, REFERRING TO VISIT HE AND RATSIRAKA HAD MADE TO TAMATAVE (EVIDENTLY SOME TIME AGO), SAID DOCKERS, RAILWAY AND POSTAL WORKERS HAD APPLAUDED ANDRIAMAHAZO, BUT IGNORED RATSIRAKA EVEN THOUGH TAMATAVE IS LATTER'S NATIVE CITY. I COMMENTED I THOUGHT RATSIRAKA WAS MORE POPULAR WITH TANANARIVE STUDENTS THAN WITH COTIERS. ANDRIAMAHAZO AGREED THAT RATSIRAKA HAD GREATER SUPPORT IN CENTRAL PLATEAU THAN ON COAST, BUT ADDED THAT PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE OF RATSIRAKA'S FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION TO GMP (POLICE UNIT WHICH REBELLED) HAS CAUSED THAT SUPPORT TO PLUMMET. ANDRIAMAHAZO ALSO ASSERTED THAT RATSIRAKA IS "SCARED" (I ASSUME HE MEANS OF ASSASSINATION), AND SEEMED IMPLY THIS IS SOMETHING OF A DAMPENER ON RATSIRAKA'S PURSUIT OF HIS POLITICAL AMBITIONS.

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 SP-02 PM-03 L-01

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7. I EXPRESSED APPREHENSION ABOUT AMERICAN INTERESTS IF RATSIRAKA SHOULD TAKE OVER, AND RAISED MY DISMAY OVER RATSIRAKA'S ATTACKS ON U.S. IN RECENT MESSAGES TO SIHANOUK AND VIET CONG (TANANARIVE 0714). I ASKED WHETHER THOSE MESSAGES WERE APPROVED BY DIRECTORY. ANDRIAMAHAZO REPLIED THAT RATSIRAKA HAD TELEPHONED HIM ABOUT DESIRABILITY SENDING MESSAGE OF SUPPORT TO SIHANOUK QUICKLY BEFORE KHMER ROUGES TOOK PHNOM PENH. ANDRIAMAHAZO SAID HE HAD CONCURRED OVER TELEPHONE AND THEN REALIZED TOO LATE HE SHOULD HAVE ASKED

SEE TEXT BEFORE IT WAS SENT. HE DECLARED DIRECTORY DID NOT SEE OR APPROVE TEXT, AND IN FACT RATSIRAKA IS IN AS MUCH TROUBLE WITH DIRECTORY OVER EXTREME WORDING OF MESSAGES AS ANDRIAMHAZO IS OVER REPPAS' DISAPPEARANCE. ANDRIAMHAZO SMILINGLY NOTED THAT RATSIRAKA SUFFERS FROM "VERBAL DIARRHEA."

8. I SPECIFICALLY RAISED MAJOR SOJA WITH ANDRIMHAZO AS ALTERNATIVE YOUNG LEADER TO RATSIRAKA. FROM NATURE OF RESPONSE I WOULD JUDGE EMBASSY IS CORRECT IN BELIEVING THAT SOJA MIGHT BE OTHER MAIN CONTENDER FOR POWER IF ANDRIAMHAZO SHOULD STEP DOWN. LATTER NOTED THAT, IN CONTRAST TO RATSIRAKA, SOJA IS STRONG INTERNALLY, BUT KNOWS NOTHING ABOUT EXTERNAL WORLD. HE CONCENTRATES COMPLETELY ON SECRET

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INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT. I SAID I HAD SUGGESTED TO SOJA VISIT TO U.S. UNDER CULTURAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM, PERHAPS IN FY 76. ANDRIAMHAZO SEEMED LIKE IDEA, BUT SAID IT WOULD BE MUCH EASIER FOR YOUNG OFFICIAL LIKE SOJA TO ACCEPT IF HIS WIFE WERE ALSO INVITED.

9. IN ADDITION TO INSURING THAT ANDRIAMHAZO IS AWARE OF U.S. ASSISTANCE RECENTLY MADE AVAILABLE OR IN PROCESS NEGOTIATION (PARA 2, ABOVE), I RAISED FOLLOWING:

(A) SINCE CERTAIN MINISTRIES HAVE INQUIRED ABOUT ADDITIONAL PL 480 RICE, WHEAT FLOUR AND SALAD OIL, I SUGGESTED TO ANDRIAMHAZO THAT FURTHER GOMR REQUESTS COULD BE CONSIDERED DURING FY 1976, AND THAT GOMR MIGHT WISH SUBMIT REQUESTS AS SOON AS TITLE I AGREEMENT NOW UNDER NEGOTIATION IS SIGNED.

(B) I SAID I HAD TOLD MAJOR SOJA ABOUT A.I.D. WILLINGNESS CONSIDER FINANCING AGRICULTURAL PROJECT IN FY 77 WITH IBRD OR FED, AND HAD SUGGESTED HE MIGHT WISH BRING UP PROJECT FOR CONSIDERATION.

(C) NOTING THAT I HAD LEARNED SINCE MARCH 14 TALK WITH ANDRIAMHAZO ABOUT BIG FERTILIZER PROJECT PORPOSAL WHICH HAD BEEN PRESENTED TO GOMR BY FRAISE CO. ON BEHALF OF AMERICAN FIRM, I SAID PROJECT MAY BE SUFFICIENTLY ADVANCED TO OBIVATE NEED FOR FEASIBILITY STUDY I HAD EARLIER DISCUSSED WITH ANDRIAMHAZO. I ADDED I UNDERSTOOD FRAISE HAS DISCUSSED PROJECT WITH MAJOR SOJA. ANDRIAMHAZO QUITE INTERESTED, TOOK SPECIAL NOTE AND SAID HE WOULD RAISE PROJECT AT DIRECTORY MEETING.

10. SEPTELS BEING SENT ON NASA STATION AND MILITARY EQUIPMENT DISCUSSION WITH ANDRIAMHAZO.

11. RECOMMENDATION: IN VIEW ANDRIAMHAZO'S SOMEWHAT SHAKY

MORALE AND SEVERE EFFECT HE FEELS RAPP'S ESCAPE HAS HAD
ON HIS POLITICAL POSITION, I BELIEVE GESTURE BY U.S. OF
ITS CONFIDENCE AND ITS DESIRE THAT HE CONTINUE HEAD
MADAGASCAR WOULD BE VERY USEFUL TO U.S. INTERESTS IN
INFLUENCING HIM STAY IN POWER. SINCE HE TOLD ME WITH
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CONSIDERABLE PLEASURE THAT HE HAD RECEIVED PRIVATE MESSAGES
OF SUPPORT FROM CERTAIN AFRICAN HEADS OF STATE WHO HAD NOT
DONE SAME FOR RAMANANTSOA, I SUGGEST DEPT CONSIDER PERSONAL
MESSAGE FROM SECRETARY KISSINGER TO ANDRIMAHAZO AS KIND
OF GESTURE WITH SHOULD SERVE OUR ENDS.

12. IF DEPT DESIRES, EMBASSY WOULD BE GLAD OFFER SUGGESTIONS
FOR ITS CONTENTS. IN TERMS OF TIMING MESSAGE COULD COME
EITHER BEFORE OR AFTER MY PLANNED DEPARTURE ON MAY 11, BUT
I WOULD URGE AGAINST TOO MUCH DELAY TO INSURE TIMELINESS
WITH RESPECT TO ANDRIAMAHAZO DECISION ON HIS OWN
POLITICAL FUTURE.

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